

NSC BRIEFING

8 December 1954

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Approved For Release 2000/08/30 : CIA-RDP80R01443R000300170004-8
BACKGROUND - AFGHANISTAN

I. In National Estimate on Afghanistan

(published 19 Oct), we concluded:

A. That strategically important buffer

state is vulnerable to Soviet pressures, because of its exposed position, its military weakness and its growing economic ties with the USSR.

B. Soviet attentions to Afghanistan--

particularly in form economic, technical assistance--increased markedly in last year (total \$11 million). Will probably continue grow.

C. However, USSR unlikely gain control of Afghanistan within next years, ~~because:~~

1. Soviet technicians ^{which} ~~would be~~ useful

for subversion, ^{but} Afghanistan has almost no pro-Communist elements

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2. USSR is unlikely to use force, since such action would offer few advantages and would bring a strong anti-Soviet reaction, particularly in Arab-Asian bloc.

D. ~~Finally, we said that,~~ despite some discussion of possible Afghan-Pakistan confederation, both internal complications and Soviet and Indian opposition make such a merger extremely unlikely.

II. Events since October have affected this National Estimate only slightly.

A. As to Soviet economic activities, these are continuing, but reason to believe that reports of accelerated penetration exaggerated.

1. Report that USSR supplying 90% Afghan oil, for example, discounted by continued Western shipments 2-3 million gallons (annual consumption in '51

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was some 3 million).

2. Soviet-Afghan trade agreements, which show fourfold expansion on paper, may well not be fulfilled.

B. Prospects for better Afghan-Pakistan relations have improved, although merger remains improbable.

1. Afghan Foreign Minister has agreed to confer on outstanding issues with Pakistan, at time and place not yet specified.

2. Although Afghan prime minister recently restated his government's

support of thorny Pushtoonistan and objected strongly to merger of West Pak States cause, his actions are considered

pre-conference maneuvers and

prospects for Afghan-Pak collaboration are brighter.

remain basically good.

(further reducing prospects for autonomy of Pushtoonistan)